



ARTICLE

8 tips for leading your family in worship

BY

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The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many Christian families to find themselves in an odd place on Sunday mornings: home. With many churches choosing to cancel their gatherings in favor of livestream services or family worship guides, here are a few tips for parents wanting to make the most of their worship at home.

1. **Teach the importance of corporate worship.** Children need to know that worship on the Lord's Day is no less sacred in their living room than it is in a church building. Corporate worship is so vital to the life of a Christian

that we should utilize whatever technology is available to stay connected to the body of Christ, to be encouraged by our faith family, and to be taught by the Word of God.

2. **Limit distractions.** The living room presents more distractions than the sanctuary. Put away toys, phones, pets, and anything else that might distract from listening and participating in worship. Instruct children to use the bathroom before you start. In doing this, you can prepare an environment where worship and study can take priority.
3. **Manage expectations.** While we want to limit distractions, they are bound to happen, and we cannot be angry or discouraged when they do. Be flexible. Embrace the awkwardness. Keep the mood light. Don't let one child with a bad attitude ruin the moment for everyone else.
4. **Open your Bible.** It's tempting to sit back on the couch and passively listen to the livestream like it's a movie. Instead, stay engaged with the sermon by opening your Bible and following along, just as you would if you were sitting in an auditorium. Make sure each family member has their own copy of God's Word in front of them.
5. **Take notes.** Watching a livestream service in your living room provides an opportunity to show your children how to take notes during a sermon. It is much more difficult to teach young children to take notes in a full sanctuary without distracting those around you. At home, however, you can instruct them to answer questions such as, "Who is speaking?", "What are you learning about God?", "What was your favorite song, and why?", or even, "What was confusing?" These notes could lead to a good family discussion after the service ends.

6. **Dad, take the lead.** As the spiritual head of the household, this is a great opportunity for you to lead your family. Be the one who gathers everyone together. Show a genuine excitement about worshipping in a new way. Sing loudly. Ask good questions. Encourage everyone to participate.
7. **Read along.** Pray along. Sing along. Just as the Sunday gathering of the church is an interactive time, not a performance, so is participating in a livestream service. Make a joyful noise, even if it's off-key. Bow your head and close your eyes when someone is praying. Read along in your Bible during the sermon.
8. **Long for the return of God's people gathered together.** Allowing your children to hear how much you miss the Sunday gathering of the church will help them see the importance of corporate worship in the life of a believer. In a small way, it will mirror the longing that all Christians have for the day when we will gather together with the Lord Jesus to be with him forever.

With a little planning and intentionality, this temporary season of isolation could be used to grow your family closer to one another, closer to your local church body, and closer to God.

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Nashville

901 Commerce Street, Suite 550

Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Phone: (615) 244-2495

Fax: (615) 242-0065

Washington

505 Second St., N.E.

Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (202) 547-8105

Fax: (202) 547-8165



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